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Disarmament and non-proliferation education

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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II. Implementation of the recommendations by Member States

A. Replies received from Member States

Burundi

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Recommendations 1 and 27

1. Disarmament

The question of disarmament is intrinsically linked to the factors that prompt the civilian population to acquire weapons. The circulation and misuse of weapons cannot be controlled unless the root of the problem is addressed. It is crucial to calm the population's fears and establish a feeling of security that is reassuring to all.

The strategy of the Ministry of National Defence and Veterans' Affairs includes:

(a) The gradual collection, as security is restored, of weapons distributed by the Government for civilian self-defence;

(b) The establishment of a mechanism for the verification and control of legally held small arms, namely the issuance of licences to carry a weapon. Small arms are recorded in registries maintained by the Chief of Staff of the National Defence Force.

2. Non-proliferation of weapons

The proliferation of weapons has recently caused increased insecurity. After walking away from the negotiating table, the Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu/Forces nationales de libération (Palipehutu-FNL) has gone on to recruit and arm more child soldiers; and armed groups of bandits, which are springing up all over the country, are attempting to establish a network to commit highway crimes and break into homes.

The proliferation of weapons is the result of cross-border arms trafficking by hostile forces that are in league with Palipehutu-FNL and supply it with military weapons.

Burundi's non-proliferation strategies include the following:

(a) Contacts have been established with the countries of the subregion, within the framework of the Tripartite Plus One Commission, to make all member States aware of the importance of collective security, bearing in mind that controlling small arms is a regional and even international concern.

(b) At the national level, Burundi has taken initiatives based on its resolution on the non-proliferation of small arms, which was adopted on 14 April 2006.

(c) Burundi has also developed a strict documentation system for the management and control of small arms and light weapons and duly records the identity of all owners, from the manufacturer to the end-user.

3. **General comments:**

Further efforts must be made to disarm persons who possess weapons illegally.

Certain requirements must be met if the disarmament programme is to succeed. It is essential to establish a peace and security mechanism in which all parties can trust and to promote interest in the programme by educating the population about the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and its consequences.

The signing of definitive ceasefire agreements with the latest Palipehutu-FNL rebel movement raises hope that the proliferation of weapons can be arrested and that General Assembly resolution 61/73 can be implemented.

This is also an excellent opportunity for the different forces, non-governmental organizations, civil society, media and religious communities to join forces and raise the population's awareness of the dangers of illegal weapons possession.

Arms for development schemes can be effective only if they are implemented in collaboration with our subregional partners, with a view to finding the incentives that are best suited to each specific case.

The Ministry of National Defence and Veterans' Affairs is ready to assist local governments through the communal and *colline* security committees that form the backbone of the disarmament subcommittees, by forcing persons who refuse to surrender their weapons voluntarily to do so.

III. Implementation of the recommendations by the United Nations and other international organizations

A. University for Peace

Recommendations 2 and 7

The University for Peace has continued to respect its commitment to offer courses in disarmament subjects, in response to the mandate that has been given to it by the General Assembly. UPEACE has specifically focused on the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation as they relate to peace and conflict. In its courses, which are offered as part of the University's regular Master of Arts programmes, disarmament is dealt with either as part of a more general issue, such as post-conflict reconstruction or conflict avoidance, or as the principal focus of the course.

Recently, it was decided that one of the principal courses in the Master's programme in International Peace Studies, entitled "Weapons of Mass Destruction and Small Arms and Light Weapons", should be divided into two different courses: one on weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and the other on small arms and light weapons associated with trafficking, violence and insecurity. The UPEACE Department of Peace and Conflict Studies is currently working on the development of the corresponding syllabi of these courses, to be offered both for degree-oriented programmes and executive education short courses. The development and actual offering of these courses will require technical and

financial assistance from the international community and bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies interested in these subjects.

In addition, the UPEACE Department of Peace and Conflict Studies has developed a course entitled "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reconstruction", to be offered during the academic year 2008-09. The underlying concept of this course is that a key factor for successful settlement of an armed conflict is the actual measures which are taken to disarm and demobilize the former military fighters of the different parties involved in the conflict, and how effective these measures prove to be in practice. The major goals of such measures are the transition of combatants into civilian lives and their contribution to the restoration of a peaceful society. This new course describes and critically analyses the goals of the three interrelated processes — disarmament, demobilization and reconstruction — the major activities they entail, and the conditions that should be met to ensure a successful and lasting transition from war to peace.

UPEACE is also developing possibilities to offer disarmament education/training courses in Geneva, since that city is the locus of the main disarmament negotiations of the United Nations, and hopes to produce a first course offering there very soon. Such undertakings require financial support, and UPEACE has been seeking such support from States Members of the United Nations. UPEACE wishes to remind the Member States that have commissioned UPEACE to produce and expand its course offerings in the field of disarmament that such expansion is not possible without related financial support.

Based upon its accumulated experience, and if financial support is forthcoming from States Members of the United Nations, UPEACE is able to offer in the near future, postgraduate education leading to Master of Arts degrees in disarmament affairs, as well as relevant training courses for disarmament professionals. Without such financial support, it is difficult to see how UPEACE can expand much beyond its current activities in this subject area.